



State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

Fact Sheet for Municipalities Appointment of a Local Open Burning Official by the Municipality's Chief Elected Official Natural Disaster Preparedness

Pre-Disaster Planning:

➤ Chief Elected Officials to Appoint Local Open Burning Officials

The DEP recognizes there could be an increased need for the open burning of brush on private property resulting from hurricanes and other natural disasters. While the DEP does not promote open burning as a brush management practice, the purpose of this fact sheet is to encourage municipalities to appoint a local open burning official and provide this notification to the DEP. This fact sheet provides guidance on open burning of brush when all other preferable management options are exhausted.

The following information is being shared in the interest of protecting air quality as intended by Section 22a-174(f) of the Connecticut General Statutes:

- the chief elected official of a local municipality has the authority to nominate a local open burning official; and
- this local open burning official must be certified by the Commissioner of DEP prior to serving in this capacity and must understand and enforce the requirements of Section 22a-174(f) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The DEP strongly recommends that each municipality have an open burning official assigned, trained and certified now. This will enable municipalities to address residential open burning related issues in their jurisdiction according to recommended practices should a natural disaster occur resulting in the generation of a significant amount of brush debris. The DEP is ready to work with chief elected officials to certify the nominated local open burning official.

Action requested:

- If your municipality **ALREADY** has a certified local open burning official, please send the official's name, date of appointment, and contact information to Timothy Marsh at timothy.marsh@ct.gov
- If your municipality **NEEDS** a certified local open burning official, please contact Timothy Marsh, for information and the approved forms used for this program, at timothy.marsh@ct.gov

Disaster Recovery Phase:

➤ Brush Management – Preferable Options

The *State of Connecticut's Disaster Debris Management Plan (September 2008)*, provides guidance as to the proper management of various debris types, including vegetative debris. See web link: www.ct.gov/dep/disasterdebrismanagement Planned implementation will be based on recycling and material separation at the point of generation to the extent possible. In the event of a natural disaster, municipalities should divert as much brush from disposal through composting,

recycling, and markets for wood chips. Many municipalities have chippers and some have tub grinders; there are also commercial services available. The Department of Administrative Services has Contract Award Supplements that all municipalities can utilize for rental of equipment with operators. See web link:

www.das.state.ct.us/Purchase/bl_Contract_display_detail.asp?F_Tran_Type=3&F_ID=14185

If all other preferable brush management options are exhausted and burning brush is being considered, please review the material below:

1. Brush includes storm-generated green waste such as shrubs, vegetation or prunings, the diameter of which is not greater than three inches at the widest point.
2. Brush needs to be separated from other materials prior to approval for open burning.
3. The open burning of brush is allowed on **residential property** provided a burning permit is obtained from the local open burning official of the municipality in which the property is located.
4. Forms for permitted burns are available to the local open burning official from the DEP by contacting Timothy Marsh as noted above.
5. Check the predicted air quality index table at www.ct.gov/dep/aqi labeled, "Predicted Daily AQI Maximums". If any site has an AQI forecast of 75 or greater, open burning must not take place anywhere in the state.
6. Check the DEP forest fire index (860-424-3333) www.ct.gov/dep/forestfiredanger prior to conducting the burn because open burning must not take place where the fire index is high, very high or extreme.
7. Open burning should not take place where woodland or grassland is within one hundred feet of the proposed burn.
8. If there are any signs of Asian Longhorned Beetle infestation, see web link: www.ct.gov/dep/alb
9. Verify that conditions do not exist at or near the site where the open burning is proposed that will jeopardize the health, safety or welfare of the public or the environment.
10. Failure to comply with Section 22a-174(f) of the Connecticut General Statutes may result in enforcement action by the DEP. See web link: www.ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/air/regulations/enfopenburning.pdf

Other open burning, beyond the local open burning official's jurisdiction: The open burning of brush in municipal landfills, transfer stations and municipal recycling centers may be allowed, provided a permit is submitted by the **fire marshal** of the municipality where the facility is located and issued by the DEP. All other open burning of brush may be authorized by the **Commissioner** of DEP or through an emergency authorization under Section 22a-6k of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The Time to Plan Is NOW

For answers to questions or additional information relating to open burning, please call Timothy Marsh, Supervising Compliance Specialist, at (860) 424-3452 or e-mail timothy.marsh@ct.gov